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INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY PERSONNEL STUDY  
PERSONNEL SECURITY: FBI1) Procedures and Timeframes

All FBI applicants who score well on a written test and are endorsed by a three-member interview panel are subject to a full-field investigation before receiving an offer of employment. During the applicant clearance process, candidates can be asked to submit to a polygraph if "such examination would materially assist in the resolution of questions on" such matters as relationship (or allegation of one) with a foreign power, freedom from coercive forces, intent to abide by all laws, and intent to use FBI employment only for lawful purposes.

The FBI complies with Executive Order 10450. It also adheres to OPM regulations in terms of data required on the FBI Personnel Status and Security Questionnaire (FD-285). All special agents and special employees must complete the form every two and one half years thereafter.

The Bureau also reviews the personnel file and does credit and arrest checks as part of the five year reinvestigation done on all employees. The focus of this effort is employee "trustworthiness" for continued access to national security information. In addition, the Office of Professional Responsibility investigates every allegation about employee misconduct or questionable behavior, as such charges are made.

For access to sensitive compartmented information (SCI), the FBI coordinates the clearances with the CIA, which controls the SCI program for headquarters and field employees. While procedures for issuing the SCI clearance differ somewhat for HQ and field staff, the variation is more one of procedures than substance.

The FBI complies with DCID 1/14. If employees came on board within the past five years, the personnel file will be reviewed and, if favorable, the employee will be briefed for access. If the employee entered on duty more than five years ago, the FBI will: check police records going back 15 years (or until age 18); verify the individual's financial status, covering five years; review the personnel file to ascertain if there are reasons to deny SCI access; and conduct a name check on the employee and immediate family.

They are beginning to computerize some of the data relating to security clearance timeframes, but have not yet done so. The goal for completion is 30 to 60 days, and most are done within that time. Those that take longer are generally those which show "security vulnerability." If data were available, it would show variation by field office, but these variations would not be constant as they reflect shifts in resources and priorities.

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Because they are able to shift rapidly (i.e. defer many new hire security clearances for a week or two to get SCI clearances for more agents so they can work on a given counterintelligence problem), the FBI thinks it is very responsive to clearance processing.

Given the fiscal year 1989 staff increases -- 662 through attrition and 800 new agents -- the Security Programs Unit will have difficulty finding the resources to meet this level of demand for clearances. They have "done more with less" for the past few years, but express concern this may well be beyond their limit.

2) Impact of Security Investigation on Agency Selection Process

The FBI does not maintain statistics on this, but the Security Program Manager believes this is negligible. Those who make it through the testing and interview process are aware that there will be a wait. There are indications that high quality technical personnel (engineers and computer scientists) are being lost because of the time required.

3) Extent of Impact of Security Process on Lifestyle/Family Issues

The FBI does not maintain statistics in this area, but believes that there is little impact. Applicants' spouses are sent letters, which they must sign and return, detailing that the job entails moving and other inconveniences. They recognize that many aspects of the FBI career are hard on families, but do not believe the security process is one that is especially difficult.

4) Impact of Involuntary Staff Separations on Agency Security

No employee was terminated for security reasons during the period of 1985-87. Employees terminated for other reasons:

<u>Reason</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>
Removed for cause	12	18	20
Resigned during administrative inquiry	65	91	99

The FBI is exploring what procedures should be used -- in instances of security removal where the employee has an extensive knowledge of sensitive classified information -- to prevent the person from compromising such information for financial or revenge purposes. They have examined CIA risk assessments, and agency staff briefed Director Sessions on their procedures.

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There are no alternatives other than removal for those employees deemed a security risk. All FBI positions are critical-sensitive and require a Top Secret clearance. The Security Program Manager believes they need an outplacement program, preferably one run by a contractor, so users would feel they are working with a neutral entity. He isn't sure where funds would come from for this.

5) Views on the Polygraph Examination as a Security Tool

Applicants are requested to submit to a polygraph examination if a security vulnerability or potential criminal issue arises during the pre-employment investigation. The Security Program Manager believes all applicants should be required to take one, and this issue has been addressed in the past and is now being considered again. No timeframe on a decision.

Current employees can be asked to submit to a polygraph examination, but have the right to refuse. The Bureau can "draw an adverse inference from an employee's refusal," but this cannot be the sole basis for disciplinary action.

Routine polygraph examinations of employees are prohibited.

6) NAPA Staff Views

Because access to SCI is needed for only a portion of FBI staff, the eligibility determination is melded into overall security procedures. While the FBI has tailored its procedures to assure that it complies with DCID 1/14, its clearance procedures appear to be less stringent than those of the other IC agencies. In part, this is because the FBI firmly believes that it monitors its employees' conduct on a more regular basis than most other agencies. This may well be true; certainly they have more opportunity for outsiders' input, because neighbors or 'clients' are well aware a staff member is an FBI employee. Unlike many other agencies, the FBI investigates all allegations made against its employees.

Even given all this, the lack of a full SBI every five years raises some questions about the potential vulnerability of FBI employees. The NAPA work has definitely not turned up any indication that FBI employees are more likely to act against the national interest. However, should a foreign group want to place someone in a position in which they could one day have SCI access and not worry about a full periodic reinvestigation or polygraph, the FBI would be the spot.

One advantage to the FBI clearance process is that staff can be shifted from criminal to counterintelligence work fairly rapidly. The FBI may be in a better position to quickly meet changing needs because they have a pool of 'partially cleared' staff who can be cleared fairly quickly; other agencies must wait for lengthy clearance processes (presuming they have qualified applicants).

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Given the growth in overall FBI employment levels and the potential need to quickly clear a number of staff, the FBI expects to be short-staffed in security and may begin to experience delays in its security processing. This is an issue for internal FBI management or their congressional authorization committees.

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